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Defending Liberty
Pursuing JusticeRobert J. Grey, Jr.
President

AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION

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July 1, 2005

Professor Douglass Cassel, Director
Center for International Human Rights
Northwestern University School of Law
McCormack Bldg - 2nd Fl - 286
Chicago, IL 60611

RELEASED IN FULL

Re: Appointment to serve as American Bar Association observer of the
proceedings involving to Maria Corina Machado

Dear Professor Cassel:

On behalf of the American Bar Association (ABA), I hereby designate you as the official representative of the ABA, and its over 400,000 members of lawyers and judges, to observe all aspects of the criminal proceedings involving Maria Corina Machado in Venezuela, and, in addition, to become informed generally regarding the status of due process safeguards and related matters in the Venezuelan judiciary.

The Machado proceedings include the preliminary hearing scheduled for July 6, 2005 and all sessions all subsequent proceedings, including the trial.

You are authorized to provide copies of this letter to any appropriate Venezuelan or American government officials or any other persons or entities in Venezuela to facilitate this mission and to request their cooperation and assistance regarding your responsibilities as an observer on behalf of the ABA.

Your mission is part of the ABA International Human Rights Trial Observer Project administered by the ABA Center for Human Rights. The project has been authorized by the Board of Governors of the ABA, pursuant to Goal VIII of the ABA, to advance the rule of law in the world, and its Goal XI, to preserve the independence of the legal profession and the judiciary as fundamental to a free society.

The objects of your mission include the following:

1. To make known to the court, the authorities of Venezuela, the prosecutor(s), defense counsel, and the accused, the interest of the American legal and judicial professions and of the ABA in the Machado proceedings and related issues;

2. To obtain information about the conduct of the trial and related legal proceedings, the nature of the charges against the accused, and the law(s) under which the trial is being conducted;

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3. To collect more general background information concerning the circumstances leading to the trial;

4. To prepare a thorough and unbiased report regarding the Machado proceedings for consideration by the ABA regarding what further action, if any, the ABA may wish to take with respect to those proceedings; and

5. To become informed generally regarding the status of due process safeguards in the Venezuelan legal system, the independence of the Venezuelan judiciary, and related matters.

The primary concern of the ABA is for the maintenance of the rule of law and the elements necessary to sustain it. On behalf of the ABA, I thank you for volunteering for this important mission.

Sincerely,



Robert J. Grey, Jr., President
American Bar Association

cc: American Bar Association Center for Human Rights